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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Hungary

REPORT

SUBJECT Construction of Atomic Defense Positions

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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE

1. In 1955, the Hungarian Minister of Urban and Rural Economy issued an order calling for construction of one defensive position in each division, for the purpose of atomic-warfare training. Such positions were constructed as follows: in regiments, for a rifle platoon; in divisions, for a rifle company and a battery; and in Varpalota (training area), for an entire battalion.

2. Responsibility for carrying out this construction lay with the following: in regiments, with technical chiefs; in divisions, with division engineer battalions. These operations were to be carried out between 5 July and 5 August 1955. Plans and general directives for carrying out these operations were issued by Colonel Zalavari, Chief of Fortifications Construction in the Ministry of Defense.

3. Necessary materials, such as bricks, cement, etc., were placed at the troops' disposal by local state-owned construction firms.

4. For the 12th Rifle Division, this model defensive position was built north of the Kalocsa Railroad Station, about one kilometer east of the road leading to Solt.

5. All officers entrusted with construction of these positions attended a course, held on 1 - 15 May in Szentendre. The course was given in the Technical Officers' School; course commandant was Colonel Lajos Szabo, and his deputy was Major Jozsef Barta. About 20 officers attended the course.

6. At the same time, demonstrations were put on at the Zrinyi Military Academy; these demonstrations were directed by Colonel Arpad Szakasits and Engineer Colonel Demtsa. They consisted of films from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as films showing the effects of atomic bombs exploded underwater, in the air, on ships, in cities, in buildings, etc.

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(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)

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7. [redacted] The atomic company positions in the garrisons were to be planned on the basis of these studies and the directives of the Chief of Fortifications Construction.

8. The commander of the 12th Rifle Division, Colonel Janos Szabo, made men available as workers from the units indicated below, as follows:

UNIT:	NUMBER OF MEN:
25th Rifle Regiment	50
22nd Rifle Regiment	50
34th Rifle Regiment	50
Artillery Regiment	12
Signal Battalion	8
37th Anti-Aircraft Battalion	8
43rd Armored Car Regiment	12
59th Engineer Battalion	35
Total	225

9. The transport company of the division made 12 three-ton Csepel trucks available for the operation. One excavator, one bulldozer, and three dump trucks were also used.

10. The work force was later increased through addition of the 1st Company of the 59th Engineer Battalion, as well as the Technical Company of this battalion. The working day lasted from 0700 to 1800 hours, including a two-hour rest period. Rations for the troops were provided by the 34th Rifle Regiment, Major Ferenc Biro commanding.

11. The work was distrubuted as follows: trenches, gun emplacements, and air-raid shelters were constructed by the rifle troops; camouflage and installation of materials by the engineer troops; and the lifting of sod squares and transport of construction materials (unloading, etc.) by the rifle troops.

12. The trenches were dug by a trenching machine. These machines dug first to a depth of 60 centimeters, and in the second phase another 50 centimeters, for a total depth of 110 centimeters, which was the machine's mamimum digging depth. The trenches were then dug by hand to a depth of 180 centimeters. The workers then had the task of shaping and adapting the trenches to their actual future use, installing, among other things, the following:

a. Firing stations,
b. Supports under the parapet,
c. Ammunition recesses,
d. Alternate positions,
e. Dead-end passages,
f. Latrines
g. Air-raid shelters,
h. Connecting trenches
i. Steps for jumping out of trenches.

The operations were originated, planned, and staked out by the leading officers.

25X1

13. At the same time, positions were also constructed for the artillery and armored cars; these positions were armored emplacements sunk into the ground. The positions were first sketched out and then dug. Since this operation involved the equipping of guns with armor plate, it was carried out by artillerymen and armored troops. When trenches (for guns and armored positions) were completed, camouflage operations were begun.

14. Walls of the combat, firing, and connecting trenches were protected, or camouflaged, by means of a carpet of reeds which was held down by concrete posts. These posts were each about five centimeters thick and were driven into the ground to a depth of 75 - 100 centimeters. (See Sketch 1.) They were bound on top with wire, in order to stiffen them and make them more resistant. (See Sketch 2.) The reed carpet was covered with a three-to-five-centimeter layer of mixed lime and cement, to prevent the reeds from catching fire during the development of heat from an atomic explosion. The carpet was painted white with lime to protect against atomic radiation.

15. Every 10 - 12 meters, there was an interval from 1.5 to 2 meters wide in the reed carpet, to prevent fires from spreading. (See Sketch 3.)

16. Internal camouflage of the structures consisted of boards and branches, the latter three or four centimeters thick and bound together with wire.

17. The procedure in this case was much the same as that described earlier. Here, too, concrete posts were used, behind which the boards were laid on edge on top of one another, as shown in Sketch 3. Here, too, there was an interval from 1.5 to 2 meters for every 10-12 meters of camouflaged area, in order to localize the fire danger. The wall of boards was given two or three coatings of mortar and a coat of white lime.

18. Some of the combat trenches (connecting trenches) were completely open; others were provided with a roof. This roof consisted of tree trunks which were 20 to 30 centimeters thick and about four meters long. On this framework, there was another reed carpet, which was in turn covered by a 30-centimeter layer of earth; on the very top lay sod squares.

19. The whole structure had to be so planned that the top layer of sod squares coincided exactly with the ground surface. (See Sketch 4.) Open places in the trenches were covered with a camouflage net.

20. Dirt, which was piled up during excavation, was completely scattered so that there would be no interference with atmospheric pressure.

21. The use of base plates was prohibited; wooden posts had to rest directly on the ground. The reason for this was that a base plate would have absorbed the atmospheric pressure, and the structure would have collapsed. The direct use of wooden posts distributed the pressure and the structure was more elastic.

22. All trenches had to be without interruption; therefore, they had to be traced and excavated in a straight line. This was also supposed to prevent any accumulation of air pressure.

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23. For each 100 meters of combat and traffic trench and in every underground shelter or other structure, there had to be one atomic broom (Atombesen), one wooden chest, and one pair of rubber gloves. These were to be used to sweep atomic dust together, and to bring the dust in the wooden chest to a pit in a rear area. (See Sketch 5.)

24. The machine gun positions (firing positions) were similarly constructed and camouflaged. In addition to the ammunition recesses, there was also another large recess, measuring 100 x 50 x 50 centimeters, for the protection of weapons against the effects of atomic explosions (splinters).

25. The system of barriers consisted of two rows of barbed-wire fencing and a mine field. The posts of the barbed-wire fence consisted of iron railroad tracks. The mines were covered with 20 centimeters of earth, to prevent them from exploding spontaneously in the extreme heat.

26. Behind the system of trenches, a decontamination station had to be erected and equipped by each battalion. This station was meant for disinfecting atom-contaminated weapons, apparatus, clothing, etc. The chemical protective clothing of each man consisted of a rubber gas-protective sheet, measuring about 180 x 150 centimeters; gas protective stockings, boots, and gloves, all made of rubber; gas mask; and rubber suit.

27. The atomic alarm was given acoustically by means of a hand siren. On hearing the alarm, the soldiers had to put on their gas protective clothing and then service their weapons, etc. Two men per rifle platoon were designated for atomic reconnaissance; these men carried with them "the necessary chemical preparations for determination of the [radiation] dose."

28. The structures were drained by means of small canals, which conducted water into small excavated reservoirs (well shafts). Water collected in these reservoirs was then removed by the soldiers, through the use of tubs.

29. After the model atomic position near Kalocsa was completed, the division commander assumed command over it. He often held discussions at the post with high-ranking officers of the division, so that, through the regimental and battalion commanders, lower-ranking leaders might be familiarized with this problem.

30. The position was occupied continuously by troops in six-hour shifts. During their shift, troops had to maintain an atomic alert status.

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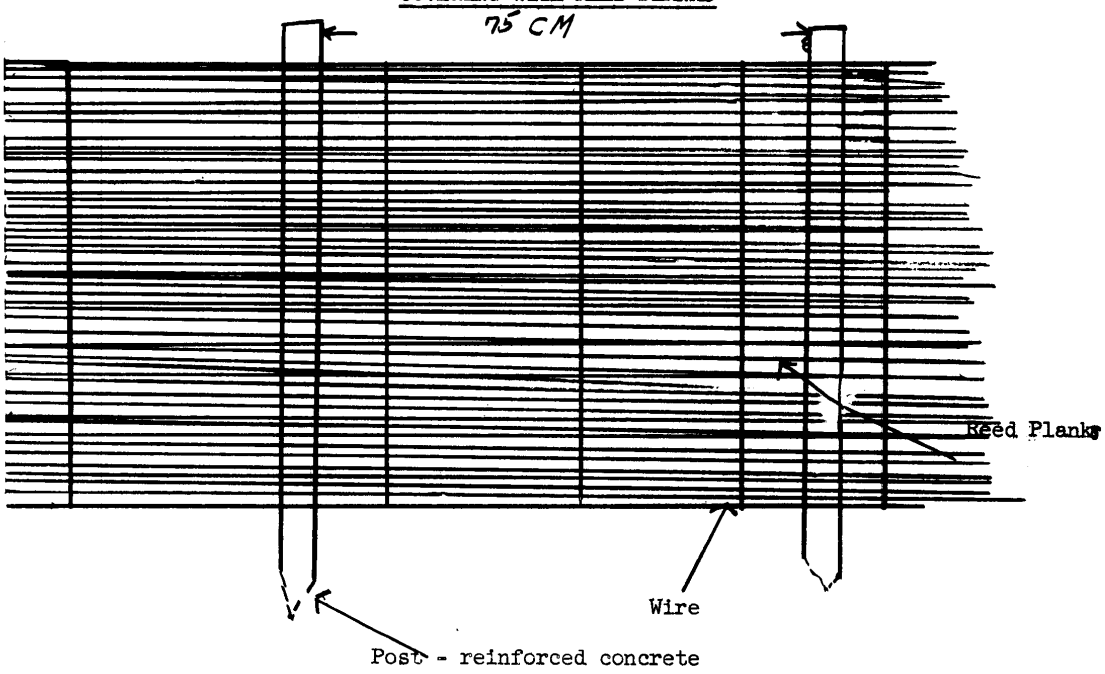
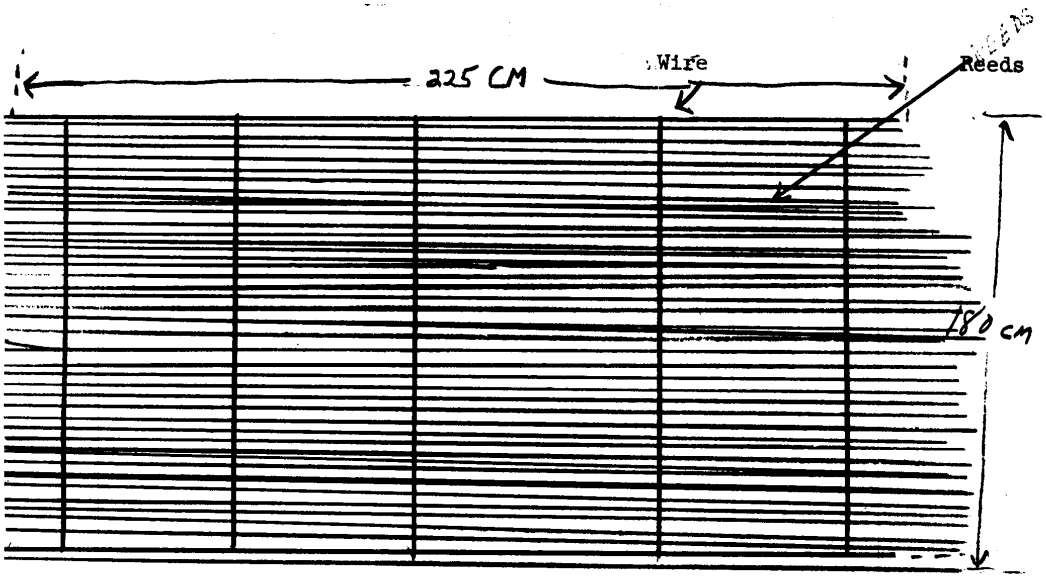
SKETCH I
COVERING WITH REED PLANKS



REED PLANK



SKETCH II
STAKING

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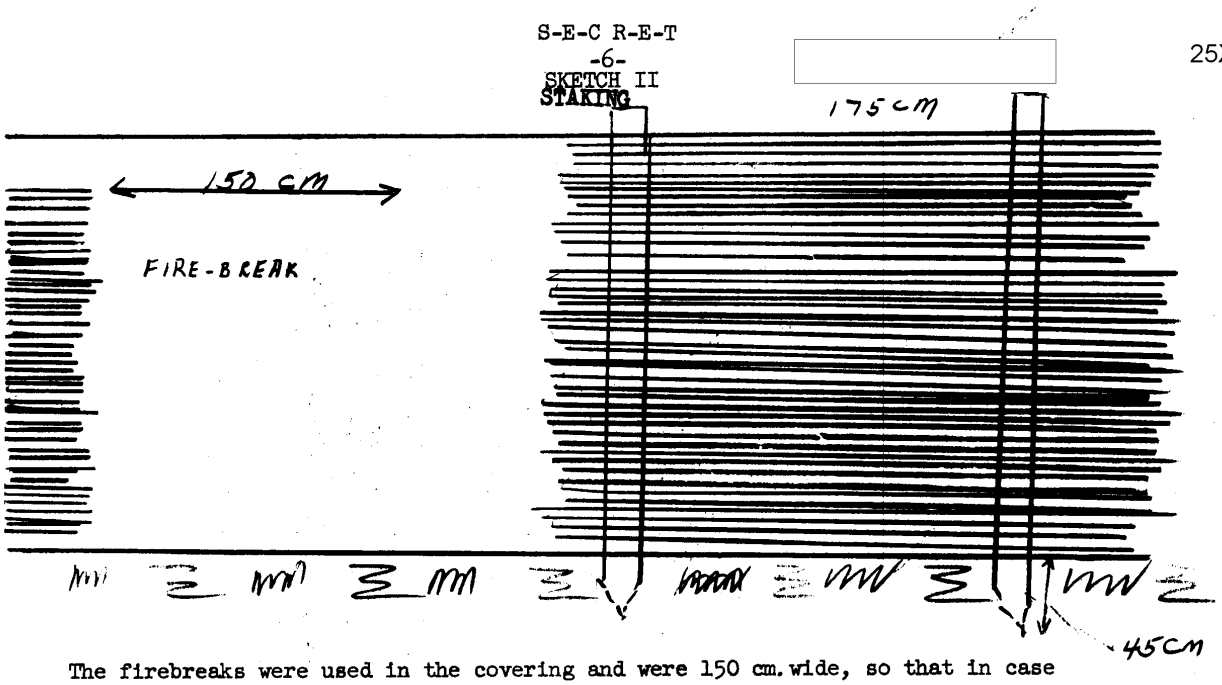
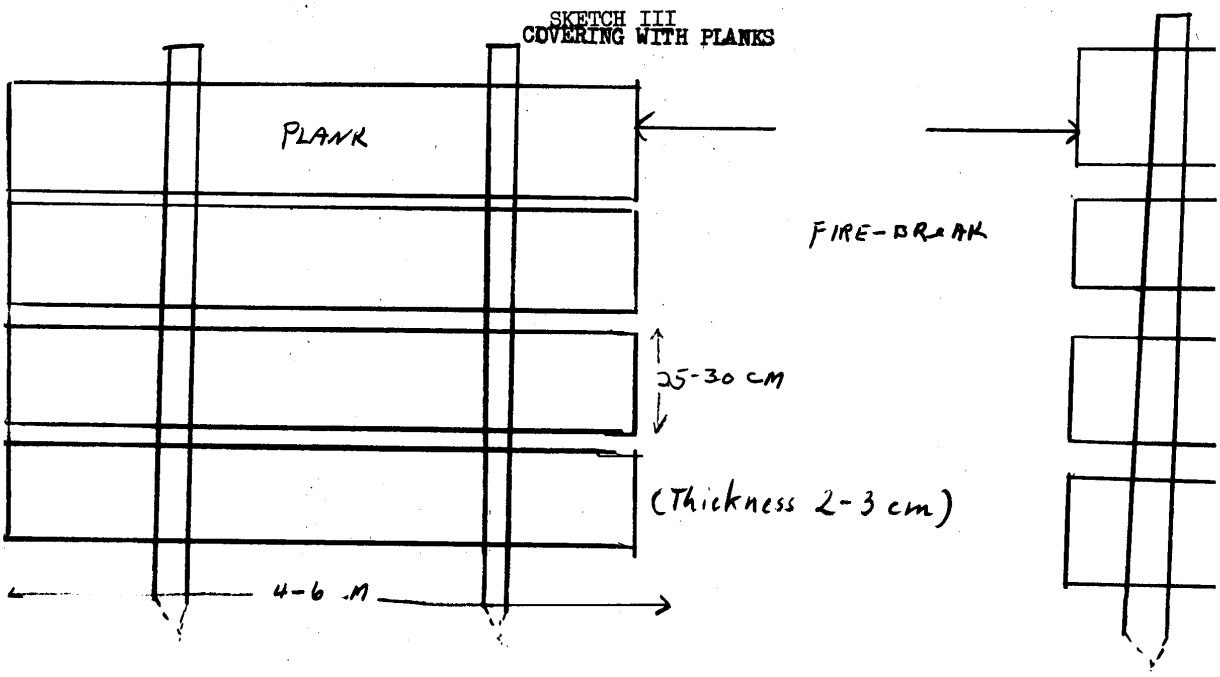


The firebreaks were used in the covering and were 150 cm. wide, so that in case of fire the entire covering would not burn up.

SKETCH III
COVERING WITH PLANKS



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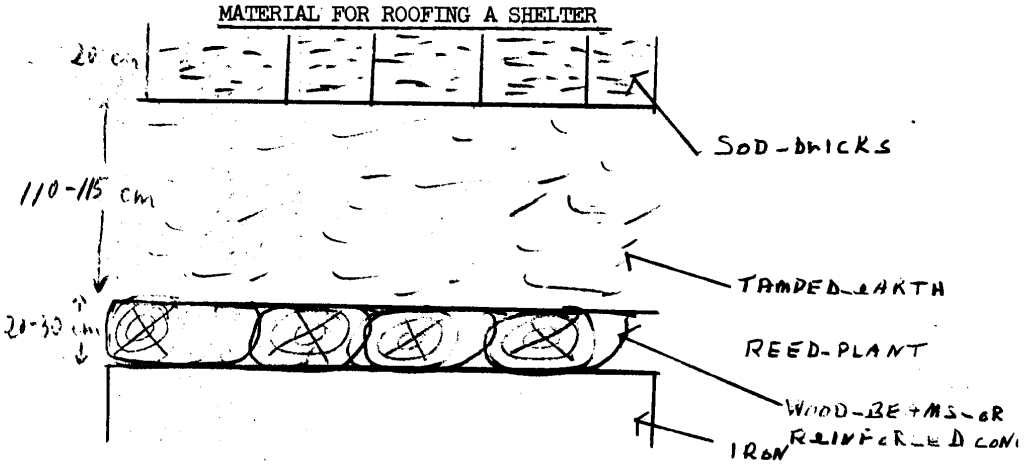
Covering consisted of reed planks, planks, or knots (?). When using reeds, an additional two-to-five-cm. covering of cement (?) was used. This was necessary in order to protect the covering and prevent fire.

SKETCH 4

MATERIAL FOR ROOFING A SHELTER



The beams were nailed together for strength at both ends. The earth was tamped down every 10 cm. [illegible portion] and a two-to-five-cm. cement lining (?) was used for fire protection.

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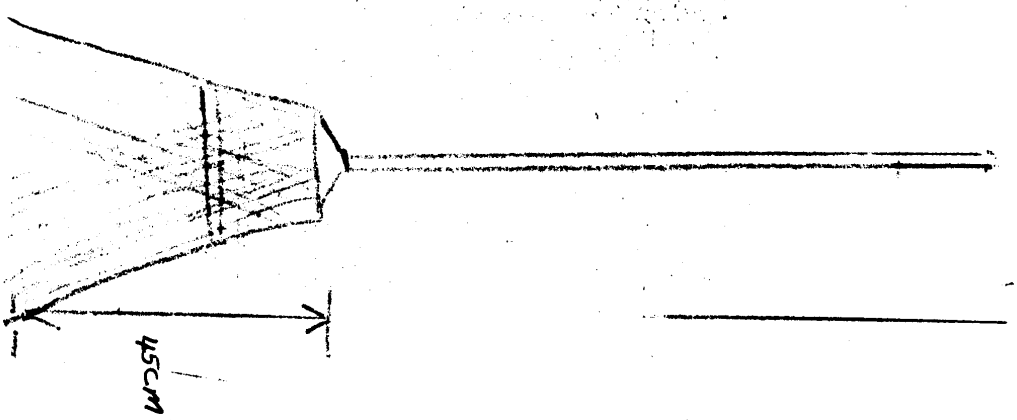
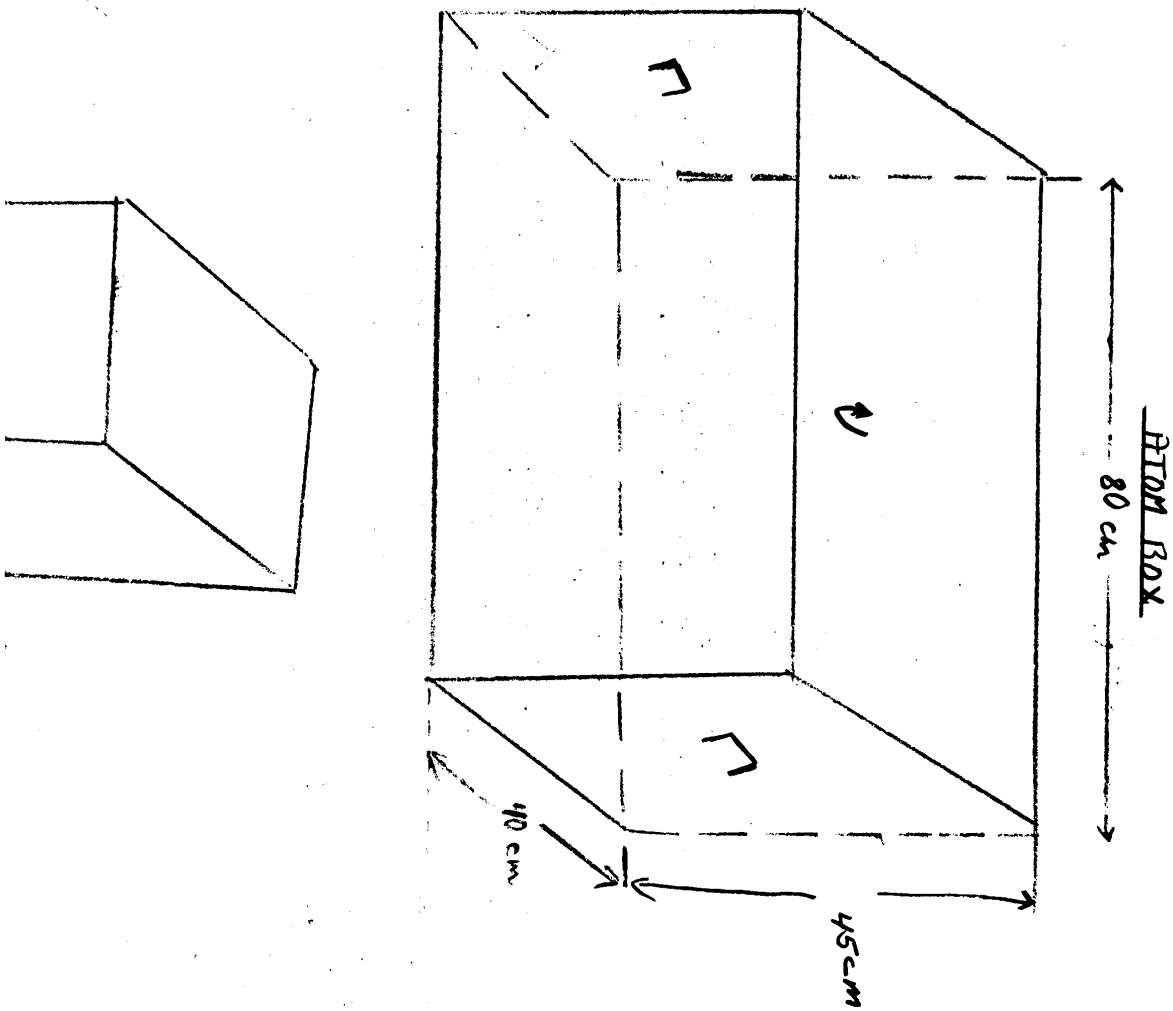
SKETCH 5



ATOM BEAM



ATOM BOX

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